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**Testimony for Senate Commerce Committee Hearing  
Opposition to SB 98  
Wednesday, May 20, 2015**

Legislation (SB 98) that would allow community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees in certain areas is currently under consideration by the Michigan Senate. The Presidents Council, State Universities of Michigan and its complete membership urges you to vote NO on this legislation.

SB 98 will lead to increased costs and create duplicative services at a time when state resources are greatly constrained and the goal is to streamline government operations.

Universities believe community colleges should continue to focus on improving their two year offerings and their ability to prepare students to transfer to universities while collaborating with universities on any four year degrees. We consider community colleges as partners in helping students become college ready to support degree completion.

Michigan's students are already very well served by the collaborative efforts of universities and community colleges. As our map shows, across the state, Michigan's universities are working hand in hand with community colleges to meet the needs of students on community college campuses. Today nearly 15,000 students are enrolled in more than 300 four-year degree programs offered by Michigan's universities at community colleges. This expansion and duplication of expensive services may threaten the collaborative relationships that have grown up between universities and community colleges. Please be prepared to discuss recent collaborations.

Just as the Legislature and Governor Snyder are seeking to have regional shared K-12 and municipal services to maximize efficiency, universities believe community colleges and universities should be working together to provide needed, nationally accredited programs in nursing and other areas. Michigan public universities already are offering 18 RN to BSN nursing degree completion programs on community college campuses, hospitals, and four distance learning programs. Twelve public and eight private colleges and universities offer baccalaureate degrees in nursing on their respective campuses. We can provide RN to BSN programs to any student within Michigan, even in the most remote locations where the numbers are too small to create a cohort model.

Michigan's public universities have pledged to offer bachelor degree programs in any area, in any part of the state. The outreach has been ongoing. Witness pledge letter.

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Central Michigan University  
Eastern Michigan University  
Ferris State University  
Grand Valley State University  
Lake Superior State University  
Michigan State University  
Michigan Technological University  
Northern Michigan University

  
**THE MICHIGAN FIFTEEN  
PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES**  
*Gateways to Opportunity*

Oakland University  
Saginaw Valley State University  
The University of Michigan – Ann Arbor  
The University of Michigan – Dearborn  
The University of Michigan – Flint  
Wayne State University  
Western Michigan University

Allowing community colleges to offer bachelor's degree programs will unnecessarily raise the operating costs at the community colleges. This will mean higher tuition, higher property taxes, or cuts in services to other students.

It is also important to recognize the high degree of flexibility students enjoy today due to enhanced university-community college articulation agreements – the agreements that say which community college courses will be accepted by a public university toward a particular degree. The ability of students to move from two-year to four-year institutions is at an all-time high, and the Michigan Transfer Network <http://www.michigantransfERNetwork.org/>, sponsored by the Michigan Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (an association of both community college and university officials) ensures students starting at a community college and intending to transfer can know before they start what they must do to move to a university for a specific degree.

The bottom line: Michigan's universities are already collaborating extensively with community colleges to meet the true needs of students, and are prepared to expand those services using existing resources. We do not need 28 new public universities in Michigan.

In summary:

- Michigan's students are already very well served by the collaborative efforts of universities and community colleges.
- Michigan's public universities pledge to start a bachelor's degree granting program in any area, in any part of the state, where sufficient demand exists to make such a program efficient.
- Allowing community colleges to offer bachelor's degree programs will unnecessarily raise the operating costs at the community colleges.

May 20, 2015

Dear Senator:

Michigan's fifteen public universities have long had excellent working relationships with the state's community colleges. We believe that an expansion of those collaborations is the most efficient way to provide Michigan residents with the four-year degree programs that some community colleges want to offer in their districts. What the community colleges are suggesting would be the most expensive and least efficient way to meet that need, the substantial costs for which would, in any event, be borne solely by students and local taxpayers. There is a better way.

The Presidents Council on behalf of Michigan's 15 public universities have pledged to collaborate with our community college colleagues and will provide locally any new baccalaureate or degree completion program for which there is a need within that community college district. This pledge would apply for any of the programs identified above, including a Bachelor of Science degree to community college graduates who are registered nurses and who wish to enroll in a BSN completion program. This pledge is identical to the commitment we made during the last legislative session.

This continuous pledge by our member universities ensures that duplication and waste will be avoided, can be implemented immediately, and is far less costly – which is exactly what our elected officials have been asking from public agencies at all levels.

The Presidents Council, State Universities of Michigan, is ready to coordinate and implement this pledge with our community college colleagues. Legislation is unnecessary, as the universities and community colleges have a long history of crafting and implementing collaborative programs.

Sincerely,



Glenn Mroz, Chair  
President, Michigan Technological University



Michael A. Boulus  
Executive Director

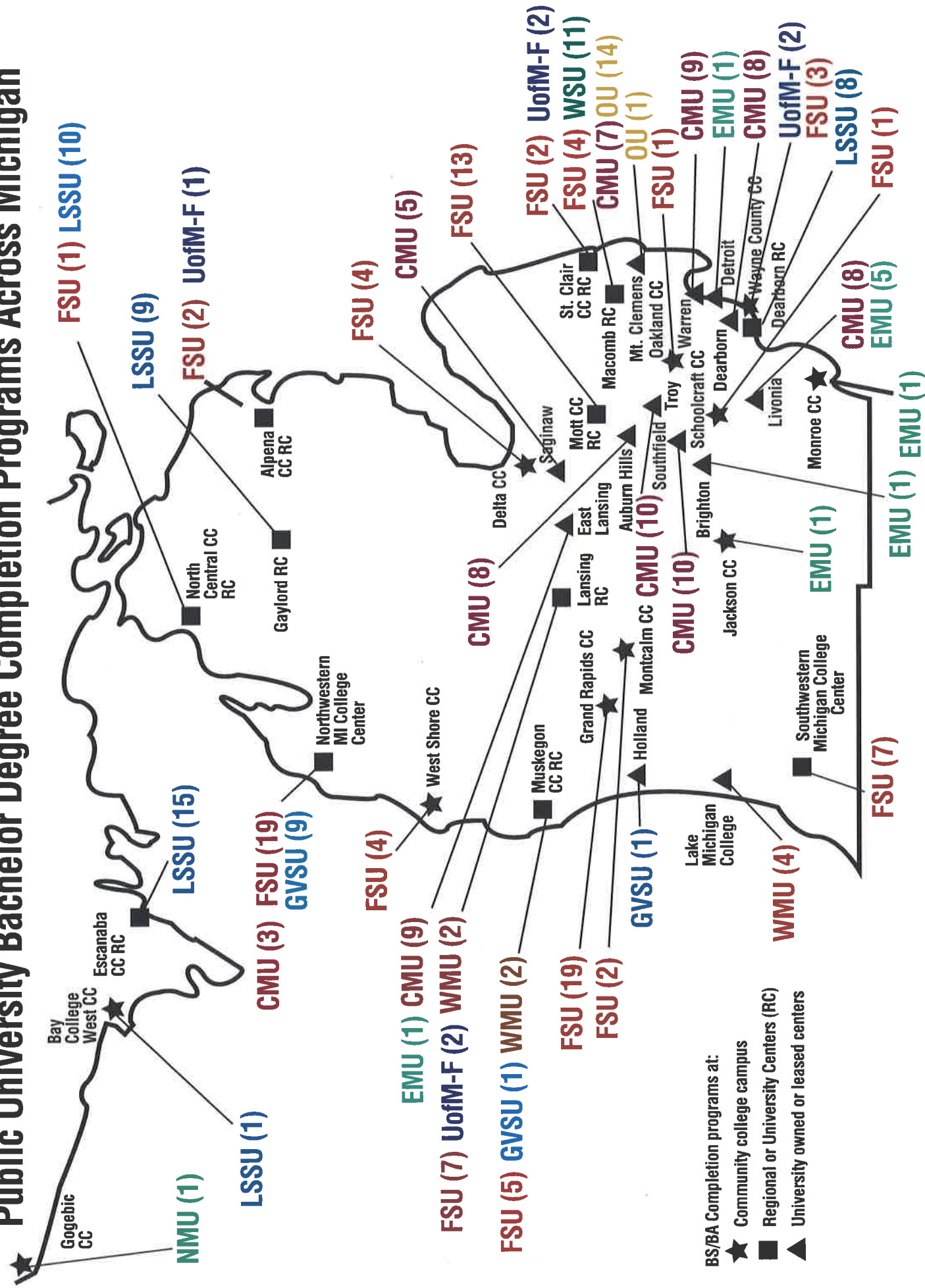
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# Public University Bachelor Degree Completion Programs Across Michigan





# MICHIGAN BOARD OF NURSING APPROVED EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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